

By Tim Linscott

Managing Editor

Perkins County High School principal Dean Friedel is not an umpire, however, he is encouraging three strikes and you are out.

Friedel recently acknowledged that over \$5,300 in repairs have been done to computers through the one-on-one program at the high school since August. Students are able to take laptop computers home with them and the result has been several cracked screens.

“Siblings at home may step on them or what have you, but we’ve seen a lot of broken screens,” Friedel said.

Michelle Evans, technology coordinator for PCS, explained that one laptop was stolen and the majority of damage done has been through screens being cracked or broken.

Not all of the repairs have been attributed to students. PCS staff have also had needed repairs to equipment but the majority of the repairs have come from student equipment.

The Education Service Unit (ESU) has a new service that will repair cracked screens for \$150. Evans noted that when the screens are sent directly to Apple for repair, the bill can be upwards of \$700.

Students pay \$100 of the first portion of repairs through an insurance waiver, which will cost the student \$30. The \$30 fee is based on free and reduced lunch status for the student.

The repairs, however, may cost the student more if deliberate acts of vandalism damage the equipment.

“If we can prove negligence, the student has to pay 100 percent of the repairs regardless of insurance,” Friedel said.

He is promoting a three strikes program that if a student has three pieces of equipment broken in a school year, then they are done using the school’s devices at home. Friedel will pitch the three strikes plan to the school board soon for approval.

“The kids can use the library, which isn’t very convenient but if they destroy \$4,000 in computers and expect another one, that isn’t going to work. I don’t know how many chances you need,” Friedel said. “After a while that can become a substantial sum.”